

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

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R 201330Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6307

INFO AMEMBASRY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 10144

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINR, PGOV, KE

SUBJECT: POLICE PORTFOLIO ENHANCES KOINANGE'S PRESIDENTIAL  
PROSPECTS

1. SUMMARY: IN RECENT MONTHS POLITICAL POSITION OF MBIYU KOINANGE, MINISTER OF STATE AND LONG-TIME CONFIDANT AND ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT KENYATTA, HAS STRENGTHENED TO THE POINT WHERE HE NOW MUST BE COUNTED A PRINCIPAL CONTENDER TO SUCCEED KENYATTA. KOINANGE'S PRESENT POSITION IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIS CONTINUING INFLUENCE OVER KENYATTA, HIS RECENTLY-ACQUIRED CONTROL OVER POLICE AND GOK'S SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO MUZZLE PARLIAMENTARY CRITICS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN NINE MONTHS SINCE MURDER OF BROADLY-POPULAR PARLIAMENTARY CRITIC J.M. KARIUKI, MBIYU KOINANGE, 68, HAS GRADUALLY EMERGED FROM PREVIOUSLY ILL-DEFINED ROLE AS ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT KENYATTA ON DOMESTIC/TRIBAL ISSUES TO BECOME ONE OF KENYA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL POLITICIANS  
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AND A SERIOUS CONTENDER FOR PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION. AL-

THOUGH KOINANGE REMAINS AN UNPOPULAR FIGURE AMONG KENYAN MASSES (INCLUDING FELLOW KIKUYUS OF KIAMBU CLAN), HIS INFLUENCE OVER KENYATTA REMAINS AT HIGH LEVEL REACHED IN AFTERMATH OF KARIUKI MURDER, AN ACT FOR WHICH MOST KENYANS HOLD KOINANGE RESPONSIBLE. (EXCEPT FOR RECENT TRIP TO U.S. FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, KOINANGE HAS BEEN KENYATTA'S CONSTANT COMPANION). KOINANGE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE ORCHESTRATED, AT KENYATTA'S BEHEST, SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS TO ASSERT PRESIDENTIAL AND PARTY AUTHORITY AND COW DISSIDENT ELEMENTS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

3. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, RESPONSIBILITY FOR KENYA'S 10,000-MAN POLICE FORCE WAS TRANSFERRED FROM VICE-PRESIDENT MOI TO PRESIDENT'S OFFICE IN MID-SEPTEMBER. THIS SHIFT, THOUGH WIDELY KNOWN, HAS NEVER BEEN ANNOUNCED BY GOK. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM SEVERAL RELIABLE SOURCES THAT IMMIGRATION FUNCTION HAS ALSO BEEN REMOVED FROM MOI (LEAVING VP WITH ONLY PRISON SERVICE) AND THAT BOTH NOW UNDER PERSONAL CONTROL OF KOINANGE.

4. SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS CURRENTLY SPECULATE THAT BERNARD HINGA, 44, WHO HAS BEEN COMMISSIONER OF POLICE SINCE 1965 (WHEN THE BLACK KENYAN REPLACED BRITISH EXPATRIATE) MAY SOON BE REPLACED. LOCAL PRESS SOURCE WITH EXCELLENT GOVERNMENT CONTACTS RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF HINGA'S PROBABLE SUCCESSOR IS DAVID WANJENGA, A FAST-RISING KIKUYU IN MID-30'S, WHO IS PRESENTLY AN ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND PROTEGE OF KOINANGE.

5. COMMENT: IN PAST KOINANGE HAS BEEN REGARDED AS INFLUENTIAL FIGURE IN KENYATTA'S INNER CIRCLE (HIS DECEASED SISTER WAS KENYATTA'S THIRD WIFE, WHO WOULD BE VALUABLE ASSET FOR POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL BID BY FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER NJOROGE MUNGAI, KENYATTA'S NEPHEW. IT NOW APPEARS THAT SOME THOUGHT BEING GIVEN TO KEEPING MUNGAI IN HOLDING PATTERN IN FAVOR OF KOINANGE. ALTHOUGH KOINANGE IS APPROACHING LUPN HE IS CURRENTLY IN EXCELLENT HEALTH FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT IN U.S. FOR SUGAR DIABETES. CONTROL OF POLICE AND IMMIGRATION IN ADDITION TO KIKUYU-DOMINATED PARAMILITARY GENERAL

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SERVICES UNIT (GSU) GIVES KOINANGE NOT ONLY UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY AS POWER BROKER FOR PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, BUT A SHOT AT THE TOP SPOT FOR HIMSELF.

MARSHALL

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## Message Attributes

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